

THAN HUUO CHAN  
Congressman from Kien Hoa  
Judge of the High Criminal Court of Vietnam

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY

35 years old, married, seven children. Born in Hue as a Buddhist family. Spent early years as a Buddhist monk in a Buddhist school. Served his conscription with Vietnamese Ethnic Tri Quang and ethnic Thien Minh (1951-53).

In 1948, he joined a Boy Scout organization led by the former Chief of the South Vietnamese Delegation to the 1954 Geneva Conference (Tri Quang Hanh) and worked in the clandestine youth resistance movement against the French occupation.

In 1949, he joined the First Viet Minh Liberation Forces (Minh Thung Force) for five years, fighting first against the Japanese and then the French in the area now encompassing I and II Corps. He held positions as Company Commander and Battalion Political Commander. By the end of 1949 (after Emperor Bao Dai signed the Treaty of Independence for Vietnam with France), he returned to the Nationalist side.

He was graduated from the Police Academy in 1951 where he remained as an instructor. During this period, while both were Montagnards, he worked and lived together with (now President) Nguyen Van Thieu. (Several of his classmates are now generals in the army.) By mid-1954, after leaving his companies and battalions against the Viet Cong and after being wounded, he was promoted to the National Order and the rank of Major. In 1955, he returned to the Police Academy, first as commander of School, and then under (now President) Nguyen Van Thieu as Superintendent (Lt Colonel).

He attended the Advanced Infantry Course at Fort Benning (1955-57). From 1958 to 1959, he served as Deputy Chief of Staff for Training and Operations in the 1st Vietnamese Division assigned by the Americans (now the 7th Infantry Division) and as the Chief of Staff at Quang Trung Training Center.

In 1960, he had his Kien personal meeting with President Ngo Dinh Diem. He was then appointed as Commanding Officer of Regional and Popular Forces in the Mekong Area (encompassing the Provinces of Tay Ninh, Long An, Dinh Dong, Co Long, Kien Giang, Kien Phong, Kien Hoa, Ca Mau, Vinh Long, Vinh Binh). He worked closely with General Hinh in the setting up of the present RV/PF concept. Following this, he was appointed as President Diem's special aide and as Reporter for National Security Council.

From mid-1962 to mid-1963, he served as Province Chief of Kien Hoa during which time he initiated the Census Grievance System as a basis for strategic hamlets and later for pacification. Following this, he was appointed Mayor of Banang during the Buddhist insurrection and held this position until November 1963. In January 1964, he returned to his position as Province Chief of Kien Hoa and remained in this position until December 1965. During this time, he developed the pacification concept most of which is accepted as the present policy in Vietnam.



By the end of 1965, he became the first National Director for the RD Cadre program and was in charge of the Training Center at Vung Tau. Most of the concepts and techniques he developed during this period are in use today. After a disagreement with Thanh and the CIA on concept and operations, he quit the program in June 1966.

He then returned to Kien Hoa; in October 1967 ran for election to the Lower House. He was elected with 42 per cent of the vote in a field of 12 candidates. Since his election to the Assembly, he has advocated:

- Buddhist cause.
- National unity.
- Freedom and justice.
- Reconciliation with NVN and NLF as basis for a peace settlement.
- Change in concept and strategy for a more effective anti-Communist struggle.

Tran Ngoc Chau is the author of two widely read books entitled:

- PACIFICATION CONCEPT
- INTERNATIONAL OPINION ABOUT THE VIETNAM WAR

He has also authored numerous articles on the current political issues in Vietnam.